4: Silva--413 M-4,5 (1947-1958) 1962 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

/281 cont./

i) His social role.

756 626 The pajé represents the highest intellectual level of the native povoado, and, not only that, but he is also the stickler for the observance of the tribal laws. He knows them, teaches them, and demands their fulfillment, being able to punish (34),

> 34. He is, then, the major opponent of the assimilation of our culture on the part of the forest dweller.

with sicknesses, lightning, and, finally, malefices, disrespect toward traditional practices.

756 [852] [844] He presides over all social life, that of the family as well as of the group. When a child is born, the one who will blow on it, exorcise it, and paint it with carajurú /carajura/, in order that it will grow up strong and free from sicknesses, is the pajé; and he will also give the medicines to the woman in labor.

[553] In some tribes the giving of the name is done in the presence of the pajé. Covering the child with smoke with his indispensable cigar, under the inspiration of the moment, he will give or will suggest the name to the father, who is about to choose a name indicated by any circumstance whatsoever, perhaps even an indecent name.

[881] When the girl reaches puberty, the pajé will spend some time with her, giving her timely theoretical and practical instructions about maternity and obligations inherent in it.

At the time of the masculine initiation, it falls to him to teach the young men the traditional legends, their rights and duties as members of the group, the ritual practices, and to verify their ability by means of interrogations, punishments, flagellations, fasts, etc.

He is also the principal instructor of the Komũ (see VII - 2, e (3) ), on whose capacity he will pass judgment, and of whom he will always be the supervisor, gathering them together periodically in assembly and giving them opportune directions for every circumstance.

/366 cont./

843 *[192] [226] d) Persons. Every pregnant woman, nihĩ-paxkõ (after the fourth month, more or less), is a dangerous being. There are various prescriptions referring to the gestating woman. For example, she cannot eat the fish from the espinhel /line with many hooks/ (VI - 5, a (4 d) ), from the cacurí, nor participate in the large-scale fishing with timbo. If she does so, the fishing will be fruitless, and the espinhel or cacurí will no longer catch fish (77).

> 77. They ruined the espinhel of Dom José Domitrovitsch. The Missionary complained and asked the reason. The espinhel "is no good," the Indian said to him, because my wife ate some of the fish caught in that espinhel and she is pregnant.

She must not touch the bow or arrow, so that she does not "ruin them."

846 *[192] About the father of a newborn baby, it is also said that he is in a state of pregnancy, nihĩ-paxkõ or nihĩ-pkõ. He must, then, take care of himself, "sihyógõ" (cf. "Couvade," VIII -- 1, b (3) ), so that the child will grow strong.

• 844 It is permissible only for women to attend the delivery; the men must withdraw. If by any chance there are male guests in the maloca, then the woman giving birth will remain in some tightly closed apartment, if there is one. Or she will leave, in order to give birth in some isolated hut or even in the forest. Before taking her puerperium bath, the woman may not see a bow or any instrument of iron (machete, ax, assagai, etc.).

843 If the husband stops with open arms in the door of the house during the pregnancy of his wife, she will have a difficult delivery.

If during her own pregnancy the woman sits down to eat, or sits in a hammock with her legs dangling, her delivery will be difficult.

/427 cont./

845 4th. -- That of the defective children. Any noticeable
847 physical defect is fatal to the newborn child. And it can not be believed that it is a matter of a magical reason, but rather, on one hand, the great vanity of the parents, above all of the mother, and, on the other, the thought that it will be a burden to the tribe, which /428/ needs perfect and strong individuals and desires only those. The deaf-mutes escape more easily (as was confirmed) because it is not until much later that they manage to verify their defect.

2) The delivery.

• 844 The delivery is considered a physiological operation of the woman, like any other, and will not excite attention or care. In spite of the lack of hygiene and of preventive measures, these daughters of Eve seem to have the most normal delivery in the world. Many times they keep on working until that moment (43),

[797]

> 43. There was related to us by the Salesian lay Brother, the Agronomist Teotônio Ferreira, the case of an Indian woman in S. Gabriel, who worked in the clearing in the morning, bore a child in the afternoon, and on the following day came to resume her work. There are frequent cases in which the Missionaries order them to take a rest and they refuse.

and shortly afterwards they begin their normal working life again.

The men, however, will leave the maloca (or wherever the delivery takes place), perhaps leaving the parturient woman in pain, because it is ordered that they cannot witness it. For this reason, if there are guests in the maloca, the parturient woman will withdraw inside some apartment, if there is any, or they will prepare it in time for this purpose, or else she will leave the maloca in order to give birth in the forest. Just as she must also not have in the place any ax, machete, or any other object of iron or metal.

/428 cont./

844 [608] Nevertheless, in the majority of cases, the mother will have invited another woman to assist her. The latter, as if she were the godmother of the parturient woman, acquires some rights over her: she will call her Max-kõã (goddaughter), and she, in turn, will call her Pax-koã (godmother) and must render her the services requested.

[852] [276] In order to conjure away any evil for the newborn child, the pajé or a Komĩ will come to "blow on it," and on its mother, with the smoke from his cigar, said Dorotéia Brito. As a preventive against sickness, he will mark the child's face with numerous, but small red spots with the magical substance carajurú /carajura/.

846 *[192] 3) Nihĩ-pkõ ("Couvade" or chôco /hatching/).

The chôco (Couvade) is in force among the tribes of the Uaupés (44).

44. From some legends of obvious patriarchalist origin it follows that the chôco did not always exist. And that it was the woman who used to take to the hammock during her discomfort. The narrator, Dorotéia Brito, at a certain point in the legend, /this footnote is continued on the next page in the original source/ added spontaneously that "formerly it was the woman who lay in the hammock."

[115]

844 [178] As soon as the child is born, the mother, with the help of the Pax-koã, cuts the umbilical cord. Formerly they did it by hitting it between two stones, nowadays with a cutting grass, the tiririca /Scleria tenacissima/, or a splinter of taquara, or /429/ even scissors (45).

[123] 45. The tuxaua of the Íde-masã tribe of the headwaters of the Komé-ya, tributary of the Pirá-paraná, urgently asked us to bring him some scissors, whose usefulness he had heard mentioned, on our next visit.

/429 cont./

844 and takes the child to the river for the bath.

Except in rare cases of a difficult delivery (or very rarely those of death), the mother soon takes up her household cares and tasks again. The husband, however, considers himself in a state of pregnancy, Nihĩ-pkõ from Nihĩ, child, and pax-kõ, father. For this reason he must rest or be sheltered, Sihyogõ, for six days (46):

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*[192]

[797]

46. We have seen some of the Indians who have attended the Mission schools subject themselves to such a custom. And they answer the words of the missionary who tries to show the uselessness of the custom: "The old ones want it this way."

he will not work, he will avoid leaving the house, taking the sun, he will spend the greater part of his time in the hammock and subject himself to a strict diet. "If the father works, the child will get sick, will cry day and night," so they explained to us.

593 It is the concept of the bond between the father and his child, as though the father himself were being reproduced. Everything, then, that happens to the father can not fail to affect the child. Since effort or a heavier diet would harm the child, the father must abstain from these things (47).

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47. This belief in the intimate connection between the health and well-being of the father and of the son holds not only during the first days of the newborn child, but also during its whole life. D. José Domitrovitsch, when superior of the Mission of Pari-cachoeira, was able to witness the following episode: Julio, the local Tukano tuxaua, upon learning that his son Mandú (the present tuxaua, 1956) had been bitten by a jararaca, left work, went to his house, put

[115]

5: Goldman E-5 (1939-1940) 1963
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Cubeo do not themselves make this identification. The outermost zone, that of manioc cultivation, is largely a female province. Men make the clearing, but women work in the gardens. A woman's garden is virtually her private domain. A man enters it upon a woman's invitation. A husband goes there to help with some heavy task or for casual sexual intercourse. There is extra spice to marital coitus in the garden because it is the traditional place for adultery and so the Indians associate it with licentious passion. Men do not ordinarily wander over to the manioc gardens. When I wanted to see the women at work in their gardens I was not free to go without an escort, who was usually the husband himself or sometimes the headman. In the latter case, the headman courteously informed the husband, and everyone else if the husband was away. Frequent visiting was definitely discouraged. Women could not help but attribute sexual significance to a man's visit and would deride the notion that a man was interested in watching them farm.

This outer zone, then, has a decided sexual connotation that is both erotic and social. Women give birth in their manioc gardens and during male cult ceremonies they may take shelter in the gardens. Nursing babies are brought to the manioc gardens regardless of sex, but from walking age on, no boy will think of playing in the vicinity of the gardens. Manioc is a strictly secular crop for which there are no rites, despite its overwhelming nutritive importance and the usual hazards of cultivation.

From the sexual point of view, the zone of secondary cultivation is a mixed one. Secondary crops include sugar cane, tobacco, *mihi* (kaapi, a vision-inducing narcotic), coca, calabash, gourd, squash, melons, yams, sweet potatoes, and sometimes maize. There are also cultivated trees—orange, lemon, pupunha (*Guilielma speciosa*), pineapple, plantain, and banana. Men exclusively cultivate tobacco, *mihi*, and coca, women exclusively cultivate bitter manioc; all other plantings are mixed. If a plant, onions, for example, is taken from the whites and the Indians have seen a white man grow it, they then regard it as a proper male cultivation. Maize is an old crop that belongs to women but not all communities grow it. Among the *Bahuhiwa* and its neighboring subsibs no maize was planted.[3] This

[3] When Koch-Grünberg was on the Cuduiari, in 1903, he observed that the upriver communities grew only maize and no manioc. For bitter manioc, he said, they came to the lower Cuduiari communities (1909, II, 82). During my survey of the river I found no community without manioc. On the other hand, maize, which had already begun to disappear in the time of Koch-Grünberg, had become quite scarce and no longer entered into the regular diet. On certain ceremonial occasions it was made up into tortillas. Mainly it was used in native beer and as

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A woman is active until the moment her labor pains begin. I have seen a pregnant woman leave for her manioc garden behaving as though it were an ordinary gardening day, and return later in the afternoon with a newborn baby. A man is forbidden to be present at the birth of his wife's first child. At her first childbirth a woman is attended by her mother-in-law. In subsequent parturitions she may be unaccompanied, but if she does not feel too strong she invites her mother-in-law or any other woman to accompany her. A woman about to give birth must alert her husband so that he will not leave the house or do anything strenuous that would interfere magically with the delivery and the safety of the infant. The Cubeo give no particular reason for having the child born in the manioc garden. They reveal only a general apprehension that if the child were born in the maloca something would go wrong. Not all children are born in the manioc garden. In bad weather, or at night, a woman settles for the rear plaza as a birth site. Occasionally outside birth is too dangerous and the woman then retires behind screens at the rear of the maloca. The point the Indians insist on is that a child must not be born within the domain of the men. The infant must be brought from the woman's domain and installed by proper ceremony in the male domain. There is a parallel here, I believe, in the bringing in of a wife from her community to that of her husband.

Difficulties in childbirth are attributed to demonic agencies and require the assistance of a medicine man. Human sorcery does not affect childbirth. The common supernatural enemy of the woman in labor is the boa constrictor. When a woman dies in childbirth it may be explained that she had copulated in her garden at one time with a boa. The boa then comes to fetch his child. If he sees that it is a human child after all, he is angered and carries away the mother.

Childbirth (*pwãntadjú*: making a person) is a dangerous period. First the mother and then the infant are subject to supernatural perils that must be warded off. Little can be done, the Cubeo believe, to protect a woman in childbirth. The magical safeguards for the child, however, are elaborate. Primary responsibility for the safety of the newborn infant rests with the parents – with the father, in particular, since it is he who has "made" the child. Some of the precautions begin well before birth. Extra coitus, we have observed, adds to the number of children. Twins, for example, are regarded as a misfortune. Some said both twins are put to death and others said only one, the last to emerge being the one to be killed. Twins may also be born if the father, during his wife's pregnancy, has eaten plantains. If at this time he should greedily break off a bit of manioc

5: Goldman E-5 (1939-1940) 1963
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826 cake when it is still on the oven, the child will be born deformed. Harelip, for example, is attributed to this delinquency in eating.
[302] The pregnant woman, on the other hand, endangers her child by generosity with body paint. Women commonly give one another genipa paint. If a pregnant woman should give genipa paint to another, her child will be born without the blue marking at the base of its spine. A child without such a marking, which is called *vei* – the term for the genipa pigment – will die very soon.

• 844 When the mother has brought the newborn infant to the maloca
854 on a manioc tray lined with cloth (in the past with soft bark fibers)
302 she proceeds immediately to bathe it in warm water, washing its body clean. She then paints the infant's face with red spots to make it resemble a jaguar child, and the rest of its body with the same red pigment. The spots will protect the infant against the jaguar, while the red body pigment, which is common ceremonial adornment, gives the infant human status at once. Finally, she ties cord bands on the baby's wrists so that its arms will grow heavy. Having done these things the mother presents the child to its grandmother, her mother-in-law, and goes to her hammock.

546 For the next three days, husband and wife spend most of their time in their respective hammocks. They move about as little as possible, leaving the house only for excretion, and avoid going near the river. They drink little water, eat only stale manioc bread and, if they wish, ants. They talk to no one but are looked after by others in the house, who bring water, keep the fire going, bring them their dry food. If the woman blows at the fire to stir it up she will develop a terrible temper. The grandmother has charge of the infant, giving it up only for nursing. Almost anything the parents might do at this time would be harmful to the infant. If either stubbed a toe it would damage the infant's toe; peppers would burn the infant's insides; it would choke on a fishbone; and so the parents must avoid these foods. This period of three days is an isolation period for the parents. Their other children, if any, are taken into another household. When Koch-Grünberg was among the Cubeo he noticed that the couple was actually hidden behind screens. Among the *Bahükiwa* the isolation was less complete. Informants had told me that the period of isolation, which is known simply as "resting," lasted ten days. However, the several instances that I observed lasted only three days, perhaps a concession to modernity.[1] But Father Giacone

[1] One informant explained that the restrictions last until the infant's fetal skin comes off, that is, three or four days.

5: Goldman E-5 (1939-1940) 1963
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task. He is said to stretch the young girl's vagina until he can insert three fingers. He then announces, "You are a woman." The Cubeo say that if a girl should reach her first menstruation with her hymen intact coitus will ever after be painful for her and she will have difficulties during parturition. Digital defloration is a secret act; officially, the Cubeo credit the moon with the act. The moon copulates at night with a young girl and brings on her first menstruation. Thus, a prepubescent girl is referred to as *paúnwe bebíko* (one who has not yet copulated with the moon).

The pubescent girl (*pupúni*: one who is blown)[3] is said to be secluded for ten days behind screens at the rear of the house, taking nothing but cassava and water. She leaves the house to excrete, through a secret doorway in the side wall of the maloca so that she will not be seen by a man. She uses a scratching stick on her head or else her hair will turn white. Some said her hair would fall out. To develop a tender facial complexion she washes with a leaf that creates a lather and she covers her face with rubber latex and painfully pulls it off. She also pushes dried peppers up her nostrils until her skin burns red with irritation. The pain of this facial treatment is a parallel to the ordeal of the ants and the whipping endured by the boys, but the justification is different. A mother says to her daughter, "You have been accustomed to disobey me. Now let me see how much pain you can stand."

At the end of the ten days her mother paints her body with genipa and she goes to the river to bathe. In the evening a drinking party is held in the girl's honor and her mother pushes her forward to take part in the dances. The period of seclusion is an affair of the women and the men behave as though nothing unusual were going on.

When a *Bahúkiwa* girl came of age during my stay among them she was sent to the house of her paternal grandmother nearby for proper seclusion. I was not allowed to go near the house and I did not see the girl until she had emerged again for the drinking party. Her hair had been cut short. I may have missed many details. Father Giacone, for example, reports that among the neighboring Tucano the shaman officiated at a girl's puberty isolation. He cut her hair short, burned the cuttings in a ritual manner, and then sent the girl to dispose of the ashes in the river.

After her first menstruation a girl is eligible for marriage but the change in her life is otherwise minor. She wears love charms and takes more care of her personal appearance. She is still attached to her mother's household.

[3] She is also known as *nominyaíwi* (becoming a woman).

6: Moser and Tayler E.N-5 (1960-1961) 1967 SQ19 Tucano SQ19



partly explained by the environment in which they live – has resulted in the small unconnected settlements typical of the Indians of this region.

A headman is responsible for the provision and organization of the household. He arranges the building of the great *malocas* when it is necessary to move. He also oversees festivals and councils. In some households his actual power appeared to be slight, and it seemed to us that the average Tukano did more or less exactly as he pleased.

In the event of a headman dying, a festival is normally held in his honour after the burial. A new headman is then elected, usually the eldest son of the chief, though this decision depends on the council of elders of the household.

If the headman is the secular authority, the shaman is responsible as a spiritual one, in that he is always counteracting the influence of the evil spirits. He also cures the sick and diseased and in the event of death names the person responsible, so that revenge may be exacted. Living in a world apart, he keeps somewhat aloof from his fellow tribesmen and to enhance this sense of separation he may wear distinguishing marks.

Tukano families are small, there are seldom more than two or three children. Why more do not survive is difficult to explain, but life in the Amazonian forest is rigorous and the Indian believes that if a child cannot stand hardship at the moment of birth, it will not be able to stand that of later life. The normal custom of washing the new-born child in a stream is sometimes fatal. Moreover, should the child have any blemish or disfiguration – signs of evil to the Indians – it is all too easy for the mother to hold the infant beneath the water till it drowns. Should she have twins, this will also be the fate of the second-born, or it will be left in the forest to die. For to have more than one child at a time is to be like the animals of the forest – a terrible disgrace. In some *malocas* a dearth of children was very noticeable, especially in the lower areas of the river where the *caucheros* had greater influence.

The children assume adult responsibilities at a very early age. When we were waiting in the deserted *maloca* we noticed a small thatched shelter close to the women's entrance. It was bare and empty, and Horacio told us that this was probably a menstrual hut. They were common among the tribes in the Llanos and the women also retired to them during childbirth. Perhaps the Tukano had the same custom, but we learnt no more.

We saw no puberty rites though we did hear of a ceremony called Jurupari[1]. At certain seasons in the year the men leave for the forest to collect baskets full of chrysalises, *mojojoy*. When the women hear the men returning to the *maloca* they run screaming to the nearest plantation. Here they remain while the ceremony takes place, for they believe that the men have brought Jurupari, their god, with them, and if they or their children should see him, they will die. The men play long seven-foot flutes. One of these trumpet-like

[1] Jurupari in fact seems to be '*lingua general*' for god – and is not peculiar to the Tukano.